1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
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CHAPTER V.

OF THE PERFORATION OF THE LIPS AND EARS OF THE SAVAGES.

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301 [304] THE Abipones, like all the other American savages, used formerly to pierce their lower lip with a hot iron, or a sharp reed. Into the hole some insert a reed and others a small tube of bone, glass, gum, or yellow brass; an ornament allowed only to the men when they are seven years old, never to the women. This custom has long since been abolished amongst the later Abipones, but is still continued by the Guanines who inhabit the woods, by the Mbayas, Guanas, and Payaguas. These people think themselves most elegantly adorned when they have a brass pipe a span long, and about the thickness of a goose's quill, hanging from the lip to the breast. But this imaginary ornament renders them very formidable to European strangers; for they are of great height, their bodies are painted with juices of various colours, and their hair stained of a blood red; the wing of a vulture is stuck in one of their ears, and strings of glass beads hung round their neck, arms, knees and legs; thus accoutred they walk the

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hungry victors. An Abiponian boy of twelve years old, who used to eat at our table, was killed at the same time by these savages, and added to the repast, being eaten with the rest; but an old Abiponian woman, who had been slain there with many wounds, they left on the field untouched, her flesh being too tough to be used. Now let me speak a little of the adorning, or, more properly, torturing of the ears.

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The use of ear-rings, which is very ancient, and varies amongst various nations, is highly ridiculous amongst the Americans. The ears of very young children of both sexes are always perforated. Few of the men wear ear-rings, but some of the older ones insert a small piece of cow's horn, wood, or bone, a woollen thread of various colours, or a little knot of horn into their ears. Almost all the married women have ear-rings, made in the following manner. They twist a very long palm leaf two inches wide into a spire, like a bundle of silk thread, and wider in circumference than the larger wafer which we use in sacrifice. This roll is gradually pushed farther and farther into the hole of the ear; by which means in the course of years the skin of the ear is so much stretched, and the hole so much enlarged, that it folds very tightly round the whole of that palm leaf spire, and flows almost down to the shoulders. The palm leaf

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A 301 304 itself, when in this spiral form, has an elastic power which daily dilates the hole of the ear more and more. Do not think that I have exaggerated the size of this spire and the capaciousness of the ear. With these eyes, by the aid of which I am now writing, I daily beheld innumerable women laden with this monstrous ear-ring, and very many men even of other nations. For those most barbarous people the A [171] Oaèkakalòts and Tobas, and other American nations out of Paraguay, use the same ear-rings as the Abiponian women. The Guarany women wear brass ear-rings sometimes three inches in diameter, not however inserted into the ear, but suspended from it.

P 171 177 301 The Paraguayrians seem to have learnt the various use of ear-rings from Peru. Its famous king and legislator, the Inca Manco Capac, permitted his subjects to perforate their ears, provided however that all the ear-holes should be smaller than those he himself used. He assigned various ear-rings to all the people in the various provinces: some inserted a bit of wood into their ears; some a piece of white wool not bigger than a man's thumb; others a bulrush; others the bark of a tree. Three nations were allowed the privilege of larger ear-rings than the rest. All persons of royal descent wore for ear-rings very wide rings which were suspended